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## Second Committee

**Summary record of the 17th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 19 October 2000, at 10 a.m.

*Chairman:* Mr. Niculescu ..... (Romania)

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00-69830 (E)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

**Agenda item 94: Sustainable development and international economic cooperation** (*continued*) (A/C.2/55/L.4 and L.5)

**Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.5**

1. **Ms. Ibraimova** (Kyrgyzstan) introduced the draft resolution on the status of preparation for the International Year of Mountains 2002 and announced that Angola, Israel and Madagascar had joined the sponsors. She expressed the hope that the Year would be a starting point for sustainable mountain development.

**(b) Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy** (*continued*)

**Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.4**

2. **Mr. Isakov** (Russian Federation) introduced the draft resolution on integration of the economies in transition into the world economy and announced that Morocco and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had joined the sponsors.

**Agenda item 95: Environment and sustainable development** (*continued*) (A/55/95, A/55/99-E/2000/86, A/55/357)

**(a) Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21** (*continued*) (A/55/25, A/55/78-E/2000/56, A/55/94, A/55/120, A/55/447)

3. **Mr. Tsui** (Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon (A/55/99), said that, unlike other phenomena with mainly local or regional impact, El Niño affected the globe in many and diverse ways. It was estimated that 110 million people had been affected in some way by the 1997-98 occurrence, and an assessment of the impact of the La Niña event which had followed and continued through 1999 was just beginning. The effects of El Niño/La Niña need not always be negative, however. Through improved understanding and early warning, changes in response could be made in fields as diverse as agriculture, water resource management and community health.

4. International cooperation was vital for monitoring, analysis and research into the phenomenon, and therefore, the United Nations had established the Inter-Agency Task Force on El Niño within the framework of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. The findings of its analysis of the 1997/1998 event would be presented in the near future.

5. Year-to-year variability in the monsoon seasons had the potential to cause widespread disaster through both flood and drought. Organizations and agencies of the United Nations system must tailor their programmes accordingly to address immediate and long-term needs in that regard.

6. At the close of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction in 1999, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly had decided to establish a successor arrangement, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), comprised of a Task Force and a secretariat under the authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. The Task Force had just completed its second meeting, and had established a number of priority areas and three working groups. As each of the working groups and the Task Force as a whole went forward with their work, he invited the international community to maintain its interest and support in furthering that form of concerted action.

7. **Mr. Ingolfsson** (Iceland), commenting on the 10-year review of Agenda 21, said that the agenda for the conference should be forward-looking, and should give a frank assessment of obstacles to progress while focusing the debate on how those obstacles could be overcome. It should also take into account the changes in the international system over the past decade, in particular, globalization and the spread of new technologies.

8. The focus should be placed on the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development, as expressed in broad themes recognized as the main challenges before the international community. His delegation suggested the following three focus areas: fighting poverty — raising the quality of life; resource efficiency — uncoupling economic growth from environmental damage; and maintaining functional integrity of ecosystems.

9. Finally, his delegation supported the suggestion that the conference should be held away from Headquarters in a developing country.

10. **Mr. Isakov** (Russian Federation) said that his Government attached great importance to progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and was making efforts to improve its legislative framework in that area. Its national strategy for sustainable development was in the final stages of completion. The Ministry of Natural Resources had recently been established to ensure a more comprehensive approach to issues of sustainable development and use of natural resources and to increase the effectiveness of environmental activities during the transition to a market economy. Russia was party to most of the major multilateral environmental conventions and was working towards accession to new instruments in that field. It especially welcomed the establishment of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and hoped that it would soon begin its work.

11. His Government also attached great importance to the strengthening of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the lead agency in that field. It supported the implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/242, and urged the swift implementation of the decision to establish the Environmental Management Group.

12. In the view of his delegation, the 10-year review of the Rio Conference should be a summit on sustainable development, and should be held in a developing country. It would be counterproductive, however, to use it as a forum for reopening the fundamental agreements reached in Rio. Good preparation was essential to the success of the review, and national and regional reviews were crucial elements of the process. At the current session, the General Assembly must produce clear guidelines for the organizational aspects of those preparations. The relevant bodies of the United Nations system and the regional commission should also be closely involved in the preparatory process.

13. His delegation viewed enhancement of the complementarities among the international instruments relating to environment and sustainable development as an important way to strengthen the effectiveness of international cooperation in meeting the commitments under those agreements. The work of UNEP in that area should continue, and should be closely linked with the preparatory process for the review conference.

14. Finally, his delegation supported the initiative of Tajikistan regarding the proclamation of 2003 as the International Year of Freshwater.

15. **Mr. Baquero** (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, reaffirmed the Group's support for the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, particularly the principle on common but differentiated responsibility. Rich in biodiversity, the countries of the Rio Group had made huge efforts at the national, regional and subregional level to protect their environment and to balance economic, social and environmental factors in promoting genuine sustainable development. Some of the results obtained had been extremely encouraging. In the meantime, their environment continued to be threatened by widespread poverty, demographic pressure, urbanization, natural disasters and the manufacture of certain exports designed to integrate the Rio Group countries in the globalization process.

16. The 10-year review would provide an ideal opportunity to mobilize political support for the Rio commitments, and to reaffirm the concept of sustainable development. Agenda 21 should not be renegotiated. The agenda for the 10-year review should be focused and action-oriented and include an in-depth analysis of such cross-sectoral issues as financial resources and the transfer of technology. The Rio Group countries were prepared to participate in the negotiation of what they hoped would be a consensus resolution giving impetus to the preparatory process of that important event.

17. **Mr. Alimov** (Tajikistan) said that his Government was taking steps to implement Agenda 21 and was in the process of establishing the necessary legal and administrative framework. Tajikistan was a party to the major international environmental conventions, and had recently decided to accede to the Kyoto Protocol to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. His delegation attached great importance to the preparations for the 10-year review of Agenda 21, which should be conducted at the highest possible political level.

18. His delegation supported efforts by countries to enhance the complementarity among the major environmental conventions, and had welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 54/217 on

that issue. One of the problems requiring the attention of the international community concerned drinking water supply; over a billion people throughout the world were affected and over two billion had experienced some degree of water shortage. Much remained to be done to implement chapter 18 of Agenda 21, which addressed those problems. His delegation would like to see the year 2003 proclaimed the International Year of Freshwater, which would provide an opportunity to consolidate efforts in that area, and would be submitting a draft resolution to that effect at the current session. He urged all Member States to support it.

19. **Mr. Ahmad** (Pakistan) said that his Government accorded priority to environmental protection and had established a National Council on the Environment, and promoted sustainable development through legislation, with the participation of civil society and non-governmental organizations. Despite the commendable role of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Global Environment Facility in promoting the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the economic situation of developing countries had deteriorated and an environmental crisis had set in at the global level. Although nearly every chapter of Agenda 21 contained estimates of the resources required to meet the agreed goals, official development assistance had considerably declined since the 1992 Conference, the debt burden and number of people living in poverty had increased and the intellectual property regime had curtailed access to knowledge and technology. The problem of financial resources was stressed in the report of the Secretary-General on measures taken in the United Nations system to accelerate progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (A/55/78-E/2000/56, para. 58); in addition, the nominal zero growth approach to the budgeting processes of United Nations organizations made it increasingly difficult to undertake new initiatives. In order to be effective, follow-up mechanisms to the Earth Summit must include time-bound targets on cross-sectoral issues and promote economic and social development in a balanced manner.

20. The basis for the 10-year review of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development should be the outcome of the eighth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. His delegation believed that the review should be held in a developing country; the Group of Asian States had already recommended Indonesia. He hoped that the question of venue would be resolved by the end of the year. The preparatory process for the 10-year review should identify major constraints to implementing Agenda 21 and propose specific time-bound measures to overcome them. The reports to be submitted should chart a course for achieving the goals of Agenda 21, on the basis of analytical studies by the Secretariat and relevant specialized agencies. Priority-setting should be determined by a review and assessment of progress at the local, national, regional and international levels, which must not be prejudged. Emerging challenges should also be addressed. The review should focus on sustainable development; poverty eradication was only one part of the overall picture and could not be achieved in isolation.

21. The global intergovernmental preparatory process outlined in paras. 30 to 37 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/55/120) constituted a sound basis for the Committee's work during the current session. Every effort must be made to ensure that the final document adopted by the global intergovernmental review process was action-oriented and helped to regalvanize political will in support of sustainable development. In conclusion, his delegation fully agreed with the Secretary-General that the goal of the 10-year review should be to achieve a global commitment to a renewed North/South partnership and a higher level of international solidarity to further promote sustainable development (A/55/120, para. 37), and hoped that the high-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development would lay the groundwork for such a new partnership.

22. **Mr. Popov** (Belarus), noting that in 1999 Belarus had been elected to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), expressed satisfaction with the work and results of the eighth session of the Commission, which had considered such topical questions as trade, investment, economic growth, agriculture and the sustainable use of land resources. The preparations for the 10-year review were among the most important elements in the Commission's work. The assessment of the progress made since the Earth Summit should not only take stock of the results 10 years on, but should also involve a strong impetus

both nationally and internationally for the future implementation of the principles and provisions of Agenda 21. His delegation fully endorsed the ideas and principles contained in the Malmö Ministerial Declaration issued on 31 May 2000, and called on Governments and international organizations to develop cooperation towards those ends.

23. While the world had changed a great deal since 1992, Agenda 21 remained vital. Yet, providing financing and transferring technology were not simple matters. Clearly, both were crucial to ensuring sustainable development, but no universal answer had yet been found to the question of how to make investment in sustainable development attractive. However, as had been pointed out, the cost of doing nothing could easily exceed the cost of implementation.

24. The preparation of the 10-year review should entail a very careful study of new opportunities and financing mechanisms for sustainable development, with a critical, expert study of existing mechanisms and concrete recommendations for their improvement. It would also be important that the event should attract participation at the highest political level so as to mobilize political will for the further implementation of the commitments agreed to at Rio.

25. **Mr. Leslie** (Belize), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), concurred with the Commission on Sustainable Development that further renegotiation of Agenda 21 was unnecessary and that the 10-year review should result in action-oriented decisions and renewed political commitment (A/55/120, para. 8). It supported the implementation of agreements on sustainable development and the agenda for the 10-year review outlined by the Secretary-General in document A/55/120, paragraph 16.

26. The economies of the Caribbean Member States were highly dependent on scarce natural resources and on the natural environment, which made them both ecologically fragile and economically vulnerable. In the past several years, the CARICOM States had been hard hit by multiple hurricanes, including hurricane Mitch and, recently, hurricane Keith, which had caused tremendous personal and financial losses. Montserrat had also been devastated by a volcano. Those countries could not afford to provide normal protection for the environment and at the same time shoulder the additional costs that such natural disasters imposed.

27. The transboundary movement of hazardous and radioactive wastes also posed another threat to the survival of small island developing States and the latter had consistently opposed the use of their region for the dumping of such substances.

28. Although, the oceans and seas were the virtual lifeline of most States members of CARICOM, the Caribbean Sea could no longer sustain all the demands placed upon it without a holistic and integrated management approach. In that connection, CARICOM had actively sought United Nations support for declaring the Caribbean Sea an area of special importance in the context of sustainable development. The CARICOM countries had designated large portions of their land and maritime areas as natural reserves in order to slow global warming, formulated responsible policies for the harvesting of their marine products and established regulations on logging while the developed countries continued to resist ratifying the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and violated their commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Shared responsibilities and a global partnership were vital in order to protect the environment for future generations.

29. CARICOM member States had implemented Stage I of a project of the Global Environment Facility on planning for adaptation to climate change and were now taking a regional approach to implementing Stage II of that project. In that context, they had established the project entitled "Caribbean Preparing for Adaptation to Climate Change", which promoted the development of regional climate models, the use of indigenous renewable energy resources, enhanced capacity-building and the transfer of technologies. Continued support for that project would be needed.

30. Stressing that equality was implicit in the concept of sustainable development, he said that the CARICOM countries would require assistance in order to participate in the preparatory process and the regional meetings preceding the 10-year review. The review should confirm priorities and explore new and emerging issues. They agreed that South Africa should be the host country for the Conference.

31. **Mr. O'Brien** (Australia) said that the two critical ingredients for a successful outcome of the 10-year review would be high political visibility and an early start to international preparations. His delegation supported the convening of a ministerial conference,

including a summit with the participation of Heads of State and Government, and believed that the outcome should be an action programme for the next 10-year period. The preparatory process should identify fresh approaches to achieving sustainable development in the areas set out in Agenda 21, or in new and emerging areas and focus on a manageable number of issues of critical importance to both developing and developed countries. Every effort should be made to involve the private sector.

32. Noting that 10 to 25 million people died every year due to lack of clean water and adequate sanitation, he stressed the need for greater national and international efforts to address that problem. His delegation supported the proposal to designate 2003 as the International Year of Freshwater. Australia had ratified the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa; however, even prior to ratification, Australia's domestic legislation and programmes had exceeded the requirements of the Convention. Australia's "Landcare" community-based action lent itself to replication, and it was currently spending more than $43 million on programmes and projects relating to desertification and drought mitigation abroad. Having acquired expertise in dryland management and developed Commonwealth and other partnerships to address land degradation problems, Australia looked forward to participating as a full party in the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be held in Bonn. Australia's position on energy and sustainable development issues would be put forward at the high-level regional meeting to be held in Bali in November.

33. **Mr. Heinbecker** (Canada) said that the 10-year review should have a clear, action-oriented agenda, focused on cross-cutting organizational, strategic and policy issues, with the goal of engaging leaders in a collective vision of the future and should take place in a developing country. He commended South Africa and Indonesia for their offers to host the event.

34. The tenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development offered an opportunity to carry out a comprehensive review of Agenda 21. No attempt should be made to renegotiate Agenda 21. Preparatory work for the 10-year review should be comprehensive and broadly inclusive, building on the modalities of participation developed in the Commission and in national processes since 1992. Capturing the imagination of youth would be particularly important. It would also be important to draw in other organizations and agencies, such as UNEP, UNDP and the international financial institutions, as preparatory work moved forward. The 2002 review would be an opportunity to take a bold step towards global sustainable development, and realize the vision of a healthy, safe and prosperous world.

35. **Mr. Robertson** (New Zealand) said that his country supported the proposal for the tenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development to be the preparatory committee for the 10-year review. The process should be open to input from local communities, from the national perspective, and from the subregional and regional levels, and should be fuelled by the ideas and concerns of the local communities. The event should have the highest level of participation possible, to enable States to show a renewed political commitment to sustainable development, and would be best held in a developing country.

36. The 10-year review would have to deal with the myriad of environment and sustainable development challenges, and should therefore take a cross-sectoral approach. No one should be in doubt as to the importance of achieving sustainable development. For that purpose, clear, focused, media-friendly messages should explain the reason for the meeting and why a positive outcome was crucial for all.

37. Developed and developing countries alike, especially those with a large share of greenhouse gas emissions, must acknowledge that the Kyoto Protocol reached to the heart of economic activity, in particular the addiction to fossil fuels. The Conference would have to achieve a balance between the need for the Protocol to have clear and unequivocal environmental integrity while enabling economic development to move ahead for all countries, and not just the rich and powerful. The entry into force of the Protocol in 2002 would, as the Secretary-General had said, be a fitting celebration of how far they had come in the last 10 years.

38. The small island developing States were perhaps the most affected by climate change, and were both environmentally and economically vulnerable. That should be properly recognized in developmental

decision-making, including in the criteria for establishing the list of least developed countries. New Zealand supported the work of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission on the development of an environmental vulnerability index. The re-commitment to implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action must be matched with action by the international community.

39. The New Zealand Prime Minister had signed the instrument of accession to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. His Government was also an early signatory to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and strongly supported the improvements being made in the operations of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

40. The key to success lay in coordination and cooperation between the various conventions, and New Zealand would therefore again support the resolution on complementarities between environmental instruments.

41. The year 2000 had seen the first meeting of the informal consultative process on oceans and seas, and agreement had just been reached on establishing the United Nations Forum on Forests. In both those examples, the United Nations had shown its ability to take the lead. With such leadership, the United Nations could play a crucial role in protecting the environment and achieving sustainable development for all.

42. **Mr. Moura** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the member countries of the Southern Common Market (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) and the associated States Bolivia and Chile, said that they attached great importance to the theme "environment and sustainable development".

43. The Rio Conference had established the principles and programme basis of international cooperation to promote sustainable development. The 10-year review should identify the areas within Agenda 21 where implementation had not been satisfactory, in order to propose corrective actions. Agenda 21 should be seen as a whole. The review should not result in new commitments for developing countries that were not matched by clear commitments for developed countries, especially in the areas of forest, climate change and biodiversity. The preparatory discussions for the review Conference must take into account the fact that some very important themes identified in Agenda 21 had been increasingly tainted by commercial and protectionist considerations, which limited the treatment of the serious existing problems.

44. Education for sustainable development should receive special attention at the review conference. It might be worth considering a concrete commitment to better prepare children, starting at the elementary school level, to face the challenges of sustainable development. That would, of course, be without prejudice to the other aspects related to the eradication of poverty and marginalization.

45. The review conference should not be reduced to a discussion of the relationship between environment and poverty, as that could lead to unbalanced treatment of environmental issues.

46. **Ms. Vargas** (Costa Rica) associated her delegation with the statement made by the representative of Colombia on behalf of the Rio Group.

47. Principle 25 of the Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development stated that "Peace, development and environmental protection are interdependent and indivisible". Costa Rica, which was known as a country of peace, democracy, and civil participation, wished to share its experience as a country which had been working for many years to educate its people in environmental conservation and protection.

48. Costa Rica, with a small land area and a relatively large territorial sea area, was one of the countries with the greatest biodiversity, because of its geographical location between two continental masses, its two coastlines and a mountain range, which together created many different microclimates. Significant economic activities such as tourism, hydroelectric energy production and water resources for human, agricultural and industrial consumption, depended to a large extent on the protected forest areas that covered about a quarter of the national territory.

49. A "tree day", when songs were sung to trees, rivers and nature, had been in the Costa Rican school calendar since the end of the nineteenth century. From generation to generation a culture of peace and environmental conservation was being developed.

50. Costa Rica was currently developing a national system of payment for environmental services, in order to alleviate the effects of greenhouse gases and to conserve the forests.

51. The Government of Costa Rica had offered to host the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, and believed it could contribute to the success of the project.

52. **Mr. Staehelin** (Observer for Switzerland) said that the main objective of the 10-year review process should be to renew and intensify commitment to sustainable development and that Agenda 21 remained the foundation for any future work in that direction. In that context, political commitment at the highest level was needed, and also specific forward-looking and action-oriented initiatives, in order to promote the implementation of sustainable development by the various sectors of civil society. A comprehensive analysis should be prepared of the constraints impeding full implementation of Agenda 21.

53. The 10-year review should be a summit-level meeting; it could be called the "World Summit on Sustainable Development". Procedural measures would have to be taken at the international and national levels to facilitate broad and active participation by civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and scientists in the preparatory process.

54. Preparatory work should be undertaken without delay at the national, regional, and intergovernmental levels, in order to ensure the success of the conference. He encouraged all the international bodies concerned to strengthen their collaboration.

55. His delegation welcomed the recommendations and proposals relating to the structure and timetable for the preparatory process contained in the Secretary-General's report and would support that process in Europe. The main political issues, priorities and follow-up measures of the 10-year review should be defined at regional meetings; the results should then be considered at global preparatory meetings.

56. Since global institutions played an important role in helping countries to develop and implement appropriate policies and measures, the agenda of the 2002 event should provide for a strengthening of the relevant international institutions and instruments. The event should take place in a developing country.

57. **Ms. Berman** (International Labour Organization) said that Agenda 21 set a clear framework for the linkages between economic and social development and environmental protection. An adequate balance between agricultural growth and environmental protection was crucial for the future of the world's food production and for its sustainability. However, rural workers and their families must have access to adequate working and living conditions, and health and welfare services.

58. A recent report of the International Labour Organization on sustainable agriculture in a globalized economy showed that the agricultural sector had been marginalized in the process of globalization. A tripartite sectoral meeting had been held in the previous month to discuss that report and develop appropriate strategies and programmes.

59. The majority of agricultural workers, who made up half of the world's labour force, were found in developing countries as waged workers or small-scale farmers engaged in subsistence farming. In many developing countries, women and children often laboured for long hours with very little remuneration and rarely with any form of social protection. National regulations were in any case often poorly applied and enforced due to insufficient labour inspection, lack of understanding of hazard prevention and low levels of organization among workers.

60. The ILO Programme on Occupational Safety and Health in Agriculture aimed to address a number of those concerns. Although standards on safety and health in agriculture were generally covered by the framework Convention on Occupational Safety and Health, there was no comprehensive international or regional standard dealing with the safety and health of agricultural workers and small-scale farmers. At a special dialogue session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in April 2000, a strong recommendation had been made for the Commission to support the adoption of a new ILO health and safety instrument for agricultural workers.

61. The session had focused on the theme of workers and trade unions in the agriculture and food system, and a number of recommendations had been made that were of relevance to the mandate of ILO; ILO would work with the stakeholders of Agenda 21 to ensure that those recommendations were implemented.

62. ILO endorsed the initiatives taken by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to protect workers in the agricultural sector against the detrimental effects of pesticide use. In the age of globalization, the private sector clearly had the potential to be an agent for social change, environmental protection and the defence of

workers' rights. ILO would work with its Global Compact partners not only to foster appropriate practices among small and medium-sized agricultural exploitations in the developing world, but also to promote social responsibility among multinational corporations. Adherence of Governments to ILO's core labour standards would go a long way towards ensuring that the promise of globalization would be shared by all. It would also be necessary to provide decent work opportunities, social protection for the vulnerable and to foster a good social dialogue.

63. **Mr. Koech** (Kenya) said that UNEP should continue to play a crucial role in the implementation of Agenda 21 and should remain the principal United Nations body in the environmental field.

64. Despite the harsh economic conditions it faced, Kenya had adopted a national environment action plan to integrate environmental concerns into the planning process as well as action plans on biological resources and desertification. It had ratified most of the international instruments which were in keeping with its plans for sustainable development, and had demonstrated its political will to fulfil their provisions. The Government had recently enacted the Framework Environmental Management and Coordination Act, which would serve as a cornerstone for conservation and the rational use of resources, and was planning to review all sectoral laws which had a bearing on the environment. The aim was to ensure a healthy environment capable of providing abundant resources and food security through effective participatory management and the use of best practices, both modern and indigenous.

65. Developing countries had made significant efforts to fulfil their obligations under Agenda 21 by integrating environmental protection in their development policies. Yet some serious environmental problems remained. Widespread poverty exacerbated such problems, for example by further aggravating desertification. While poverty had been recognized as a problem in that context, it had not received the attention it deserved. Since the 1992 Earth Summit, overall development aid had declined significantly both in real terms and as a percentage of gross national product, and no new resources had been provided to expand environmental protection programmes in Africa. The failure of the countries of the North to meet their commitments in terms of financing and technology transfer had hampered the implementation of the decisions taken at the Summit.

66. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification had benefited the least from multilateral support, and was not in the portfolio of financing of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Desertification had seriously affected many African economies, and should be addressed by GEF. On that question, Kenya associated itself with the Abuja Declaration on Policy, Institutional and Programmatic Change of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.

67. **Mr. Snyder** (United States of America) stressed the importance of adequate and safe water supplies in all parts of the world. On Earth Day, United States Secretary of State Madeleine Albright had launched a global water initiative, in which the United States, in partnership with other countries and international financial institutions, addressed issues relating to transnational river basins in key regions. With the increased usage of renewable energy sources, entrepreneurial opportunities grew in areas such as clean energy technology, which also helped to reduce climate change and air pollution.

68. The carefully crafted and balanced language of Agenda 21 should remain intact but its 10-year review should take a flexible approach which allowed for the discussion of sustainable development tools that had emerged since 1992, including innovative finance designs, such as the Clean Development Mechanism; the use of microcredit at the local level; and a wider application of advances in information technology. The 10-year review should also be sufficiently flexible to take into account the regional dialogues to be conducted in coordination with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNEP and regional partners. To that end, the secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development should not finalize the agenda or title of the 10-year review until the regional dialogues had provided their input.

69. While his delegation fully understood the view that the 10-year review should be organized as a global conference to be held outside New York, its general policy toward the United Nations had prevented it from joining the consensus on the matter at the sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council. If current United States legislation was renewed, the United States would be

unable to pay its share of funding for such a conference.

70. His delegation strongly supported an enhanced role for civil society, particularly non-governmental organizations, indigenous and women's groups, academia and the private sector, including business and industry. That was the only way to ensure continued implementation of Agenda 21 in an age of declining official development assistance and rapidly growing foreign direct investment. The 10-year review would also constitute an excellent forum for discussion of the current system of international environmental cooperation, with emphasis on improving the effectiveness of existing international environmental institutions and structures. Other aspects of sustainable development which should be addressed were poverty alleviation, human settlements, food security, biodiversity, climate change, desertification and coral reef protection.

71. **Mr. Basmajiev** (Bulgaria) said that his Government agreed that regional preparatory processes should be set up for the 10-year review of the Earth Summit in order to determine regional priorities and new initiatives for the further implementation of Agenda 21. Regional institutions could do much to facilitate such preparations and to underscore the importance of high-level intergovernmental mechanisms such as the Environment for Europe process. The initiative taken by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with regional commissions and UNEP to organize round tables to suggest innovative approaches at the regional level was a commendable step. Regional preparatory meetings should be held between March and November 2001 to ensure timely contributions to the global preparatory process.

72. The Commission on Sustainable Development should act as an open-ended preparatory committee for the 10-year review. He agreed that the first meeting of the Commission's tenth session should be expanded to allow the Commission to start its preparatory work and that the work could be organized in four sessions as suggested in paragraph 33 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/55/120).

73. The document adopted at the 10-year review conference should serve to reinvigorate at the highest level the global commitment to a renewed North-South partnership and to enhanced international solidarity. It was of the utmost importance for the summit to mobilize media attention and public support, in particular among the young.

74. **Ms. Bai Yongjie** (China) noted that although there was general agreement on the need to promote sustainable development, global environmental degradation was continuing, and the goals established at Rio were still a long way from being achieved. The main factor hampering implementation of Agenda 21 was the failure of the developed countries to fulfil their commitments.

75. To ensure the success of the 10-year review conference and establish a new global partnership, all the principles established at Rio must be preserved, including the harmonization of environmental protection and development, common but differentiated responsibilities and respect for sovereign rights over resources. Such principles also referred to financing and the transfer of environmentally friendly technologies. The conference must focus on the implementation of Agenda 21, and must also address new challenges emerging in the implementation process. Gaps between commitments and actions must be identified, effective solutions must be found and political will must be reinforced.

76. The main thrust of the conference should be assistance for the developing countries in overcoming obstacles to sustainable development. In recent years, many developing countries had, despite their best efforts, suffered environmental degradation because of their poor economic state. The availability of adequate financial resources was the most important condition for the implementation of Agenda 21. The developed countries should honour their commitments, for example by increasing official development assistance to 0.7 per cent of their gross national product, by providing additional resources to developing countries and by transferring environment-friendly technologies to them under favourable terms. Full participation of the developing countries would be crucial to ensuring the success of the conference. The event and its preparatory process must take into account the special situations and legitimate needs of such States.

77. **Mr. Amaziane** (Morocco), said that all the decisions required for the preparation of the 10-year review must be taken at the current session. Regional and international intergovernmental meetings should be convened to assess the progress made since 1992 and

to identify obstacles. That could only succeed if States at the national level critically assessed the activities undertaken and the results achieved. The international community must provide developing countries with the resources necessary for them to take part in the review process, for example by funding participation in preparatory meetings and by assisting them in drawing up their national reports.

78. Extreme poverty, desertification, drought, demographic growth, lack of financial resources and insufficient technical and technological capacities were among the most important factors contributing to environmental degradation in the South. Convening the review conference in a developing country would draw the attention of the international community to such problems.

79. Notwithstanding all the promises made at the Earth Summit, environmental degradation had continued, official development assistance had declined and technology transfers had not been facilitated. Worse still, the principle of common but differentiated responsibility had apparently been given short shrift, as the developing States had been asked to make efforts disproportionate to their capacities. Flows of private capital to certain developing countries must not be counted as contributions towards sustainable development, as the main driving force behind them was the profit motive, and not the well-being of future generations.

80. The main objective of the 10-year review must be to secure a global commitment to a renewed North-South partnership and international solidarity to promote sustainable development. The event must bring questions of sustainable development to the attention of the public and decision makers. There was no point renegotiating Agenda 21, since the main problems encountered related to its implementation. The 2002 conference should concentrate on subjects of broad interest to the international community, such as poverty, production and consumption patterns, climate, energy and water, while also addressing the questions of financing and technology transfer. Morocco would play a positive and constructive role in that process. Environmental protection could serve as a catalyst in releasing a surge of solidarity in the international community, as it was in everyone's interest to preserve their shared habitat.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*